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SYMPATHY A MEANS OF USEFUL INFLUENCE.

ONE of God's best gifts to man is the power of sympathy; but so widely diffused are its blessings, like the sunshine and the genial rain, that we scarcely realize its value, or appreciate its worth. Like dews, silently and unobtrusively it sends abroad its kindly influences, and as they to the springing grass and tender blade, so is it, in the wayside of life, to our hearts, reviving and strengthening gentle emotions, that were chilled by the benumbing weight of care, broken by disappointment or withered by the breath of selfishness. It was the far-reaching sympathy of Jesus that made him welcome everywhere,—sympathy for suffering, temptation, even for the sorrow occasioned by sin; for because he knew the weight of its woe he died to save us from it. And are we not by this power drawn ever nearer to him?—sympathy with his spirit of self-sacrifice and love even unto death;—and are not we led to be self-sacrificing and devoted by the precious example? “And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me.”

We talk of the blessing and beauty of loving widely and warmly, but love is imperfect without sympathy, and we must cultivate the one for the sake of the other. Would that we realized “the treasures untold” of thought and feeling that will not be revealed save by the golden key of sympathy, unlock-

ing all hearts. We should then wonder at our stupidity and blindness, in leaving them so long neglected.

It is beautiful and good to keep bright our sympathies with the outward world ; to make it to us the interpreter of God's wisdom, goodness, power and love. It is a blessed thing to realize its grateful ministry in hours of trouble and grief, to be comforted and soothed by its gentle teaching. It is refreshing to turn to it in all its freshness and truth when weary of the turmoil and strife of life. Nature is like a mother. Let us go to her when we will, she is ever ready to receive us with outstretched arms, and never does she send us away comfortless. For every mood of mind has she a response, for every grief of our hearts has she a balm. Who of us hath not known and blessed her ? If such it be to us—dumb and inanimate nature—how much more should immortal beings, with thinking minds and feeling hearts, be to each other ! Can we feel that none have ever turned from us, without having their burden of care lightened by being shared ? If we would but give full scope and play to this faculty divine of our nature, how much less of selfishness and thence of sin, would there be in the world ! for methinks if heart should answer to heart lovingly and singly, we should oftener find germs of good than seeds of evil. How much goodness might spring up and bring forth abundantly, that now lies dormant for the want of a nourishing hand or a sustaining care ! How much of evil might be crushed in the bud, by being painted in its true colors,—its deformity clearly displayed ! How full should we be of a right, true, hearty interest in life ! There could be no life-weariness, no distaste or disgust, but reverence, and hope, and cheerful trust, if by this secret spell of sympathy we could enter the inner temple, and trace the course of the under-current that is flowing on, soon to be lost in eternity, and out of "which are the issues of life." We should not then be so constantly mourning over "*our* broken cisterns," but in striving for others we should forget ourselves. And knowledge would bring wisdom, wisdom bring faith, and life would glide on serenely in patient waiting. To the true heart of love, nature in its ever-varying forms is full

of intensest interest ; but, in its grandest, sublimest forms, how can it compare with the struggle of good and evil in the heart of man, of the immortal with the baser instincts ? Yet to many who commune with the one most lovingly, is the other a sealed book, only known by their own narrow experience, and too often the whole judged by that.

If we but possessed this power of sympathy, how different would be our judgments. Were the veil lifted, we should find the apparently heartless were heart-*full* of stifled, smothered emotion ; the merry and careless we should too often find sad and weary-hearted ; and those harshly condemned as frivolous would be found striving to fill an aching void, by the "vain shows of a vain world." Here were a field of labor for an earnest heart. To each and all we might come as an "angel of light" leading them. Do you doubt that they would gladly follow, from the dusty, toilsome way, to "the green pastures, and beside the still waters ?" If we love our Lord and Master we should strive to be like him, and this was ever his chosen work "to seek and to save what was lost." The labor of love is "twice blessed" ; for where, while so occupied, should we find room in our own hearts for selfishness, censoriousness or harshness ? We should rather overflow with pitying love and patient forbearance. It is noble to desire and to form a high Christian character ; it is lovely to minister unto the physical wants of the needy ; but most beautiful is the service, by the eloquence of a loving heart and the influence of a strong faith, to turn the gay, the frivolous, the thoughtless, the worldly, the selfish, each from their folly, to serve the true and living God, to persuade them to become disciples of the meek and lowly Jesus. To pray for, to think for, to care more for others, is it not the life of a ministering angel ? And are we not all "ministering spirits" ?

But this sympathy must not spring from, nor be governed by, impulse, for that is wavering and unstable, causing the deeds of tomorrow to cancel the words of to-day. It must be a deep and abiding principle, the fruit of love and thought. It demands a high standard of Christian character, and an enlarged

love of humanity. "To *do* good we must *be* good," is trite but true. We must know our own hearts before we study others; have patience with and subdue ourselves, before we are prepared to be merciful to others. We must realize our own waywardness and weakness before we can understand the wayward and the weak. We must experience ourselves, if we would teach others, the overcoming power of prayer and faith. And what perhaps is more, we must know what it is to conquer in the struggle with evil, if we would give encouragement to others in the same strife. Therefore our mark must be high, and our efforts to attain it be steady and unflinching, if we would lead others to the same goal. The highest inducement to holiness is that "God is holy," but the hope of serving others is not far beneath it. Of the two commandments, one is, "Love thy neighbor as thyself." Is not personal advantage too often the single purpose of our life?—at best a kind of refined selfishness. Strive for the good, for its own sake, and it will become so beautiful to you, that you will long that others should share its privileges as the greatest of blessings. Our interests must be widely extended. And this requires not feeling merely, but earnest thought. A superficial glance, and all things seem to move on alike; a deeper search, how different are all! We must think long and patiently, study soberly human nature, if we would serve it,—its secret springs of action, its hidden motives, its daily life in all its details. Nothing must be deemed too insignificant, nothing too trivial, if we would know it, in all its height and depth, length and breadth.

Think not to do it easily or quickly; but be assured that the more steadfast and searching the observation, the more intense does the interest become. Darkened, obscured, defaced as may be God's image in the human soul, yet you will always find it there. Were it not worth years of toil, if in one single heart that image could be made to approach even its destined brightness? Then as we thought more and learned more and knew more of this world of tempted, suffering, struggling, aspiring beings, children of the same Father, saved by the one Savior, destined to the same Heaven, how could it

be otherwise than that self-sacrificing, all-enduring love and sympathy for them should be in our hearts? And forgetting the faults and follies that may perchance have disgusted us, and looking beneath the surface, we go forth among them, to heal the wounded spirit and bind up the broken heart. Our presence should be as the glad sunshine, illumining the dark places of sin, chasing away the troubling clouds of error; our voices breathing melodies of the unseen world, and a halo encircling us, such as the ancient painters loved to place round the saints of old.

E.

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## THE LETTER AND THE SPIRIT.

A SERMON, BY REV. A. A. LIVERMORE.

2 CORINTHIANS iii. 6. Not of the letter, but of the spirit; for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.

THERE are two methods of interpreting the word of God; one of the letter, the other of the spirit: one literal and verbal, the other liberal. One makes much of the words, or forms in which an idea is conveyed, and insists upon a rigid construction of the language. The other passes within the outworks which surround, or the illustrations which beautify, to grasp the central thought itself, accounting expressions as of little consequence in themselves, and as only valuable for the sense they convey; since it is the gem gives value to the casket, not the casket to the gem. One is chiefly concerned with the grammar and lexicon, and is anxious about the cases of nouns, and the modes and tenses of verbs, while the other aims at the mind of the author, and from that standing-point would read his language and interpret his sentiments. One admits only what is expressly written, the other allows much room for what is implied or understood, but is not directly expressed. One is fearful of going too far, the other of falling short.

One inclines more to the explicit precepts and positive rules ; the other seeks to penetrate the profound depth of truth, and catch its rare etherial essence. The method of literal interpretation leads in its extremes, strange as it may appear, to the divergent errors of Catholicism and Calvinism ; while the free construction, allowed too much scope, leaves us only the thin abstractions of Neology and Pantheism, or with its correspondencies and celestial senses, mystifies us with the flights of Swedenborgianism.

If however we must range ourselves on the one or the other side, if we must be either Literalists or Liberals and Spiritualists, we should not hesitate long between the two. For the errors of one class arise from the very principles with which they set out ; the errors of the other arise not from their principles, but from the perversion and misapplication of their principles. If we must be either of the letter, or of the spirit, we should rank ourselves on the side of the spirit, for the reason given in the text : in other words, because by a rigid, literal, verbal understanding of the Scriptures their genuine life is destroyed, while by a free, liberal, popular construction, you seize their life-giving spirit, and arrive at the mind of the author.

The importance of the alternative now proposed has never received sufficient attention either from learned or unlearned readers of the Bible. It scarcely seems to have been observed that the undue weight given to the one or the other side of this question, has been the grand prolific source of the errors and absurdities in Christian theology. Hardly any step could be taken more conducive to the cause of both truth and union than the establishment of just principles of biblical interpretation, and their steady and consistent application by every class of Christian believers.

The merits of this subject will however be better understood by immediately turning to some well known cases where the two methods indicated are brought into use.

In the sixth chapter of the Gospel of John, our Lord says to the Jews, " Verily, verily I say unto you, except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life

in you." He repeats the same language several times in the course of the chapter, as if it was of the greatest consequence.

Proceeding on the verbal method, a large proportion of the Christian Church in all ages has held literally to these words and phrases, and believed that no man could have spiritual life in himself, unless he eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of man, or what is deemed equivalent, partake of the elements of bread and wine, which, after their consecration by the priest, are regarded as the literal flesh and blood of the Savior! And to carry out in practice this idea to its utmost limits, the cup was not distributed among the lay communicants of the Church, as we should have naturally inferred from the strict and literal system; but to exhibit a still higher refinement of the theory adopted, it was denied on the ground that as the flesh contains the blood, so the bread when consecrated imbibed the efficacy of both the flesh and blood of Christ, and it was therefore superfluous to partake of the cup! This and kindred errors in relation to the Lord's Supper, infect not only the Church of Rome, but large portions of the Protestant world, and appear at this moment to be gaining ground.

On the other hand, the liberal interpreters deny that any of the above inferences are to be drawn from our Lord's words in question. No reference is probably made in that chapter to the ordinance afterwards instituted. Jesus had just before fed the five thousand with a miraculous increase of loaves and fishes. This leads to the vivid imagery quoted. He charges the multitude with selfish motives in following him, and exhorts them to labor for "the meat which endureth unto everlasting life." He then calls himself by a strong figure the bread of life, and says they must eat this spiritual bread. Some said it was a hard saying, and many have felt the same since, because they understand the language literally. But our Lord explained himself soon after. "It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." As much as to say, The saving, life-giving power of which I speak resides not in my flesh literally, but in my words and spirit. They are instinct with

vital energy. How much stronger and nobler an idea is yielded by the free and figurative, than by the literal method ! How much more agreeable to "the analogy of faith," to the harmony of truth, to the whole circle of Christ's teaching of which this is one arc, to understand, that he gives us his doctrine, his moral and spiritual life to feed our life, than that he imparts his flesh and blood in any literal or material sense whatsoever !

Many are ready to say that, if you do not adopt the most literal signification of a passage of Scripture, you explain it away. But the charge is wholly misplaced, the fact is directly the reverse. You explain away the sense of any book, when you rest on its apparent, verbal import instead of descending into its interior idea. Because we assert that this or that text of Scripture is figurative, we by no means say that it means little, or means nothing, but on the contrary that it is all the more full of thought and life on that very account. For, the very fact that there is something more than a bare statement of truth in a commonplace way attests to the warm and aroused mind of the speaker or writer, which could not be satisfied with tame and prosaic words, but indulged in the most natural way in signs, pictures, figures as embodiments of thought, and struck off from the glowing anvil of meditation a thousand brilliant sparks in every direction.

The Jews took Jesus literally when he said, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up" ; and they said, "Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days ?" But he spoke of the temple of his body. They explained away the sublime idea of the resurrection from the dead, and substituted in its place the literal, limited conception of prostrating the marble and the mortar of the edifice, and raising it up again to its former estate. So it is uniformly. The verbal sense is always the least sense, the feeblest, most frigid thought : the spiritual sense, the most living and profound. The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.

Incalculable injury has been done to the Bible by wresting its free and popular language, its graceful, figurative phrases to



suit a rigid, stiff literalness. Such treatment would have been the ruin of any other work, less potent than the oracles of divine truth. They have survived the perversion only because the light that is in them, cannot be wholly put out, though all the clouds and mists of human tradition and false philosophy gather about them, for they shine with an independent and inextinguishable radiance of their own.

In short, the same disposition, which the ancient Jews so often manifested in torturing the words of Christ to express a different sense from what he designed, has largely infected the Christian world in all periods. When he spoke of his kingdom, the kingdom of God, the kingdom of heaven, he simply meant the order and reign of his religion, but their minds caught fire at the prospect of an actual earthly sovereignty. So, at the present time, nothing will satisfy some persons but the personal advent of our Lord bodily to sway his sceptre over his dependent subjects. It is not enough for them that his religion is enthroning itself above principalities and power, ascending a loftier throne than that of the Cæsars, and subjecting kingdom after kingdom, and continent after continent to his laws. They are not content that he is beginning to reign as the Prince of peace, the Deliverer of the captive, and the universal Savior of the world. They slight the tokens of his coming in the selfish and warlike passions being softened, and in the growth of a true self-respect, social order, civil and religious liberty, general education, Christian morals, and the reformations of this age. But they are haunted with the pageantry of a throne, a sceptre, attendants, ministers, and all the coarse accompaniments of royalty. Like some of old, they would take Jesus and make him king. But by giving a spiritual construction to the words of our Savior, we yield them the highest sense, the truest dignity. For the outward reign of the best sovereign is but little. While the inward subjection of the whole man to Jesus, the bringing of all the forces of the intellectual and moral world into his obedience and consequent freedom, is the only real glory, either to the spiritual ruler, or to his spiritual followers.

Another instance among the many which might be mentioned, in which the teachings of Christ were obscured by an adherence to the letter, was when he spoke of his connexion with his Father. Because he said, he was the Son of God, they accused him of making himself equal with God; a position which he never claimed. But by their literal understanding of his words they narrowed and degraded his idea. In the same sense he said, "I and my Father are one." It is not explaining away this remarkable phrase to say that not oneness of person, identity of consciousness is meant, but unison of affection, purpose, and interest. This is to give it the true and spiritual sense. The oneness of Jesus with God in a moral sense, as filled with his love, reflecting his attributes, obedient to his will, and engaged in his highest service, is a far greater and more inspiring idea than bare identity of being. The one is poor and cold, because it is of the letter; the other is profound and sanctifying, because it is of the spirit, and therefore it giveth life.

One of the greatest mischiefs which creeds and textual, verbal controversy have inflicted, is that they have attracted attention to the letter of Scripture, and so far have thrown its spirit into obscurity. They have exercised the skill of the grammarian more than the temper of the saint. They have sent the Christian student to his lexicon oftener than to his prayers. They have turned the simplicity of Scripture into the jargon of metaphysics. Are we to believe, and believe only what is in a creed, composed by fallible men in imperfect language? Shall we go whither it goes, and stop where it stops? What! Christianity shut up in a creed, imprisoned in the Assembly's Catechism, the Presbyterian Confession, or the Thirty-nine Articles!—then might the sea be poured into a nutshell. Christianity is shut up in no form of words, for it is greater than all words. It is a spirit, and, like its embodiment Christ, like its author God, no expressions can perfectly describe, as no thought can fully comprehend it. The language of the New Testament is the sign, symbol, manifestation of this spirit,—a true, beautiful, forcible manifestation; but the spirit

itself still soars far above and beyond, pure as heaven, blest as Jesus, infinite as God. After this spirit we ought to aspire, and not yield adherence to the dead letter, and cling to literal words.

An analogous case will illustrate this view more fully. I go forth to witness the fair creation at this refulgent season of the year, when heaven seems to have descended to sojourn for a time upon the earth. I walk amidst endless signs of beauty and order and wisdom and power and goodness. The pure blue sky as it softly meets my eye, the fresh breeze as it fans my brow, and the harmony of every grove convey to the soul an indescribable sense of the reality and presence of God. I care not to dwell on any single leaf, or chord, or sunbeam, to learn that God is great and good. All nature declares it with one voice. All is grand, all is fair, all is wise. The same master-idea is expressed by each individual star and tree and flower. But I will not scan too curiously these single letters of the mighty alphabet, the infinite language of the Almighty; let me rise to the spirit of the whole, to Him who is greater than his works. Thus only shall I receive the truest and most inspiring idea of the Infinite and Ever-Blessed One. When I see a fine landscape, when I behold the worlds of fire and glory that roll and shine above us, I feel myself in the presence of One who could make a yet fairer world, yet more glorious and stupendous exhibitions of his unbounded perfections; of One, who has not exhausted himself, but rejoices in making ever new revelations of himself in the boundless fields of the universe.

In a similar spirit ought we to commune with the word of God and with the Gospel of Christ; not cling to the words with a schoolboy literalness, but seek to enter into the life-giving spirit. This or that text, or all texts, cannot fully describe the sum total of Christianity. Here are signs, symbols, pointing to it, and partially representing it, as the sun, moon, flowers, mountains, partially exhibit God; but we must not stick in these, and lose the living energy of the whole. The Gospel is taught us by a life, a death, a resurrection, an ascen-

sion. These facts convey what no mere description could embody, a weight and world of meaning, which no progress can exhaust, no discoveries supersede. And if we would devote more time to imbibing the large, generous, deep-toned spirit of our religion, to receiving and freshening in our hearts its glorious principles and ideas, and less attention were given to the letter and external doctrines, our progress would be far more satisfactory. For men become disciples of the Savior not by following set rules, but by drinking in his spirit, the spirit of all holiness and goodness. Not that the distinctive precepts and positive commands of the Master are not to be most faithfully followed; but they are to be obeyed in the spirit; their sense to be perceived, their relations and effects to be understood, and their tone of feeling to be cherished, and then obedience will not be of constraint, but willingly; virtue will not be a mechanical propriety, but the inmost perfection of the character. And nothing can ever help society to outgrow the narrowness and exclusiveness of the systems of theology, generally received, but the reception of the great central principles of the Gospel; love to God, love to man, the worth of the soul, the accountableness of the individual, the sublimity of human destiny, and the certainty of retribution. In the presence and under the action of these eternal truths, these magnificent sentiments, all littleness and bigotry stand abashed, and hasten to hide themselves in that night to which they belong.

While then we would say with the prophet, "To the law and to the testimony," we would also add, "To its life-giving spirit, not to its dead letter." The Gospel of Christ is a new moral creation. It is a universe of truth. Its great ideas never can be exhausted, its perfect laws displaced. But so far as we insist on single words, texts,—the tokens and emblems of these laws and ideas, to the exclusion of the general import, we shut ourselves out of this glorious creation, we blind our eyes to this beautiful universe, and creep into a dark corner. But the pure resolve, the earnest prayer, the breathing of the heart after light and rest and God, will take us out into its invigorating air and sunshine and divine beauty. If we choose

to be contracted and illiberal, it is easy to be so, though all the while we date from the Church of God and register our names among the followers of the Lamb. But if we would be growing Christians, either personally, or as a Church; if we would enjoy religion, and find its yoke easy and its burden light, we must pierce through the shell to the kernel, and enter more into the spirit of our faith, and rise to ever new and holier views of life and duty. Though prisoners in the flesh, we are prisoners of hope, and may bathe our souls in the heaven of light and love. In saying this, no recommendation is given to vagueness or mysticism. An habitual state of sentimental reverie enfeebles every virtue, and prostrates all manliness of character. A spurious spiritualism is one of the follies of the day, though far from being native to the New England mind. But what is most earnestly advised is the spiritual study of religion and its records in preference to its doctrinal, or textual, or verbal study. Not that one may not be good, but the other is far better. For while one may give us an accurate creed, though it can hardly do that, the other inspires a divine life. The one may save us from absurdity, though it has not always accomplished even that end, but the other rescues us from sin. The one may make us good theologians, though it has made many poor ones, but the other constitutes us heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away.

Religion is a history, an institution, and a doctrine, but eminently and always it is a spirit. The law of the spirit of life, or to drop the Hebrew idiom, the law of the living spirit in Christ Jesus hath made me free, said Paul, from the law of sin and death. Would that all men might forthwith enter into that living spirit! Shall we be ever learning and never come to the experimental knowledge of the truth? Shall we always remain among the first rudiments, among the beggarly elements? Let us be satisfied with no dead letter profession, or understanding, or practice of religion. If it is any thing, it is a thing of spirit, life, reality, progress. If it is any thing, it is every thing, the very breath of our being.

If the Christian teacher can have one desire, higher and purer than any other, as the heavens are higher than the earth, it is that his flock may be spiritually minded Christians; not that they bear this name or that; how poor will sectarian titles look in the light of the eternal throne! how discordant will the watchwords of party sound in the seraphic choir! but that they may be living men in Christ Jesus. To start one soul in the endless progress and bliss of a divine and spiritual life were doing more than to cast a thousand minds in the mould of a human creed, or make them feeble imitators of some great leader. Brethren, our hearts' desire and prayer is that you may be Christians in all the vast and unfathomed meaning of that word; that you may have the spirit of Christ, without which you are none of his: and what is "the fruit of that spirit but love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance? Against such there is no law."

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#### A HYMN OF LUTHER.

THE following is a translation of one of the great reformer's most celebrated productions, the hymn "Ein' feste Burg ist unser Gott." The translator has aimed less at melody of verse than at faithfulness to the words, the measure and the spirit of the original; but he feels that he can feebly convey an impression of the energy of this famous old song, the favorite of the German Protestants, in which the fearless spirit of its author is discernible in every line. The army of Gustavus Adolphus sung this hymn as they prepared for battle on the morning of the field of Lutzen, where their great leader died in the arms of victory. The king, we are told, sung the words, and the army followed in chorus. Nearly two centuries later, these verses contributed to fill the mind of Follen with courageous trust in God. His mother, speaking of him when a boy, and his young companions, says, "They would assemble daily in our courtyard to exercise in gymnastics, and then they would

go up to Charles's large chamber, and, seating themselves in a circle, sing a hymn, often 'Ein feste Burg,' and afterwards regale themselves with a glass of water, never anything else. We congratulated ourselves upon having such a son."\*

It is interesting to contemplate Luther as a poet. That lofty mind, which gave such an impulse not only to his own age, but to following times, was not insensible to the charms of music and the melody of verse. But his music and his verse were suited to his character. He turned from the stern work of controversy, or the sublime task of translating the Scriptures, to refresh his mind by no trivial lays. His hymns were sung by armies contending for religious freedom, his musical compositions raise the devotional feelings of thousands to whom his native language is unknown.

In the following translation a single word has been altered in the eighth line of the second verse, to avoid the expression of a doctrine which could not suitably find admission to these pages.

"EIN' FESTE BURG IST UNSER GOTT."

A tower of safety is our God  
A rock of endless ages,  
He guards us free from every ill  
That round our pathway rages.  
Our ancient deadly foe  
With malice may o'erflow,  
In the dreadful armor dight  
Of his cunning and his might;  
Is none on earth can meet him.

With all the power in vain we strive;  
Already must we perish,  
But the righteous one our cause sustains,  
Whom God himself doth cherish.  
Dost thou ask of his fame?  
Jesus Christ is his name,  
The Lord of hosts is he,  
And no other Lord have we;  
Our souls must he deliver.

\* Life of Dr. Follen, page 11.

And if the world with fiends were full,  
 All ready to devour,  
 We would not yet our courage lose,  
 Nor tremble at their power.  
 Their chief, in the height  
 Of his ire and his might,  
 In vain is his pride,  
 For himself hath been tried ;  
 A word can overthrow him.

Thy word by foes unharmed shall stand,  
 Nor thanks to their forbearing ;  
 'T is granted to our earnest prayers,  
 Our Father's mercy sharing.  
 Take all that we claim,  
 Wife, children, lands and name,  
 Life itself may be reft,  
 Still our treasure is left,  
 The kingdom yet is ours.

To God, the Father of all grace  
 Be praise and adoration,  
 Who of his mercy hath bestowed  
 His Son for our salvation ;  
 To the Comforter, the Spirit,  
 Whose blessings we inherit ;  
 The kingdom he bestows,  
 The way to Heaven he shows,  
 His aid be ours forever !

S. G. B.

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### A WORD FOR THE DENOMINATION.

Our recent religious anniversaries have suggested many thoughts, some of which it may be well to express. These meetings are becoming every year more interesting and more important. From the combined causes of increased facility of communication and increased action on the great subjects of theological and social difference, the brethren in attendance



are many more than formerly, more meetings are held and crowded, the whole week is filled when before only half of it was used, and the difficulty of finding speakers has changed to a difficulty of finding time for all to speak who wish. It is gratifying, that with these differences, with all the excitement of new questions, good order and harmony prevail. We have never seen a better spirit manifested than in the meetings of the present year; not only in our religious meetings, where the most serious questions, on which we ourselves differ, were fearlessly but calmly discussed, but also in the discussions on Slavery by our own brethren, where likewise decided differences existed and appeared, yet without acrimony or the least disorder. It is the first time that the Unitarian clergy have called meetings expressly on the subject of Slavery. As that subject must be discussed, we were glad it was kept by itself, fairly met and thoroughly debated by the favorers and opposers of distinct action upon it. Two good effects, at the least, resulted; one, that the time of our other meetings was allowed to be given to their legitimate objects, without the introduction of this disturbing element; the other, that evidence was given of the possibility of handling even the 'exciting topic,' and differing materially on some points, without violence, imputation of motives, abuse of one another or of those who have abused us. It was worth much to see a body of clergymen, who, with all clergymen, have been openly denounced for several years, and never more than this year, falsely and nefariously held up to derision and menace as the defenders and chief supporters of the worst evils and most flagrant enormities, the "Bulwark of Slavery," and a "Brotherhood of Thieves"—to see these men calmly discussing their own duties on the subject, reprobating unanimously the tremendous curse of slavery, urging almost to a man the duty of decided expression, but scarcely alluding to the fact of the maledictions, or the existence of their gross vilifiers.

We are abolitionists. It is quite immaterial whether others allow it or not. We will pray, we will preach, we will talk and act, according to our sense of duty, truth and wisdom, in-

dependently alike of the one party or the other, for the speedy and total abolition of a system of injustice and inhumanity, with which, in our view, no other bears comparison. But we do protest against the assaults of the nominal abolitionists upon the Church and the clergy, as unjust, unwise, unbrotherly, and unchristian. Still this is not so great an evil as slavery itself, and we would say less about it. We desire not to follow the example of those who meet for the relief of the slave, and spend their time and eloquence in abusing each other and abusing us. If this poor work must be followed, we wish some other season could be chosen for it, rather than that of our *religious* anniversaries. We believe that slavery ought to be discussed. We will join in the discussion, if it be temperate, and rejoice in the opportunity. And we here throw out the question, whether it would not be better on every account, that some other week in the year should be taken for this express subject, when both the professed abolitionists, and all others, clergy and laity, could meet together or apart, and neither divert any one from other objects that must be presented, nor have their own time or privilege abridged by different engagements.

But we intended to speak particularly of the religious meetings, and of our position and prospects as a denomination. That position never seemed to us better, those prospects never so good. If Unitarianism be dead or dying, it has the strangest life of any creature of which we ever read, either in human or natural history. It has borne all sorts of blows. It has endured all manner of attack and peril from without and within. It has been reported again and again as in its last agony. It never in fact had anything, we are told, but a name to live. Still-born at first, forced into an artificial and puny life, its existence asserted yesterday and denied to-day, it has gasped on through infancy and childhood, neglected, repulsed, starved, consumptive, buried—and still it is alive. It speaks, and is heard. It shews a vitality no longer to be questioned. It manifests a strength which scarcely its friends and family believed. For it has just encountered a sharper trial than any before. It has been wounded in its own house. It has wit-

nessed a division among its own supporters—a division, but not a separation or quarrel. A difference of opinion freely and boldly expressed, but no discord, no alienation or heat. That which some of our brethren feared would prevent this year our usual harmony, and prove fatal to our co-operation, has had the effect only to make us stronger in our position, more definite in our views and expressions of faith, and more resolved, while we contend earnestly for that faith, to contend meekly and charitably. It may be doubted, if there has been any body of men since Christianity began, more independent of each other and all others, more free from dictation and dominion, less shackled by authority or precedent, creed, fear, or favor, than the Unitarians of the present day, and those who convened the present year. Yet with all their freedom and their boldness of utterance, they are united in spirit, one in purpose ; and are at this moment, as a denomination, contributing more and doing more than they have ever done, for the vindication of their principles, and the spread of Gospel liberty and Christian truth.

For the facts that sustain these assertions, we refer to the published Reports of the different meetings, and the Annual Report of the Unitarian Association soon to appear. There is evidence, surely, and no little encouragement, in the fact, that three new societies are begun in Boston, and a fourth promised in South Boston, that in two large towns in the immediate vicinity there is a decided movement for the formation of other new societies, growing directly out of the increase and overflow of worshippers in the present churches, while in Worcester, Hartford, and other places, there is more than a beginning and the best assurance of progress. Evidence and encouragement also are found in the successful establishment and full operation of the new Theological School at Meadville, on the borders of the great West, inviting and already receiving from that vast region devoted young men, anxious to be educated in a liberal faith, and willing to preach it almost without money or price to the thousands who wait for it there. Many of these young men are of the Christian denomination. And when it is considered that in that denomination there are said to be now

some two thousand societies, all Unitarian, differing from us in some points and measures, but agreeing in the essentials, sharing and seeking our fellowship more and more, laboring in their own way, but indefatigably, charitably, and most successfully, for the promotion of the truth as it is in Jesus, it is enough of itself to silence all talk about the decline of Unitarianism, and what is far better, to inspire our own hearts with gratitude and holy courage.

But are there no duties, as well as encouragements? Duties always, and many now. Of these some are peculiar to the time and to us. It is a time of increasing activity in all matters of opinion, inquiry, and enterprise. There are no foundations so deep that some do not disturb them, no lines so broad, or walls so high, that they are not overleaped. The great duty then, certainly one of the most obvious and imperative duties, is to settle and declare our own faith, with independence and charity. Every man should know what he believes, and why he believes it. Every man should be strong to defend, and liberal to diffuse, his faith. Let him be sure that it is the Christian faith, that it rests on CHRIST, the only infallible teacher that ever lived, then let him extend it by a good life, a true heart, and a generous hand. That we become at once consistent disciples and living missionaries of the truth, is the urgent demand. No Christians will so condemn themselves as we, if, with our professions and the high mark set for us, we are selfish, inactive, or uncharitable. And let our charity be enlightened, as well as large. A weak, indiscriminate charity is a poor temper. As in the giving of alms, so in the holding and treating of opinions, if there be no discernment, no principle, no preference of right or reproof of wrong, evil and only evil can come of it. Charity may be greater than faith or hope, but it is not greater than truth. It can never require us to think lightly of truth, or of its opposite. Neither can it require us to hold the truth in secret and silence, lest if we utter or spread it, it create disturbance or do harm. The idea that the propagandist must of necessity be a sectarist, and that the missionary is a fanatic, is no honor to the head or heart of any

believer ; and if we have given it birth, or lent it any countenance, we have the more to learn and do. If we hold opinions, it is because we think them true and useful. Of course, we must think the opposite opinions false and hurtful. And why we should not say both the one and the other, when we say anything, or why we should not regard it as a duty to say it aloud and often, and diffuse it far and wide, it is difficult to see. Consistency demands it, and charity equally. Society demands it, and humanity. Our brethren in the faith, scattered over the land, many of them feeble, disowned, buffeted, beseech us to give them the truth, in pure form and liberal measure. Our brethren of other names and differing faith, ask us, some in wonder and some in taunt, why we do so little to *promote* the religion we prize, if we do prize it ; why we are so slow or weak to pull down the strongholds of error, or at least to plant by their side the citadel of invincible truth. More than all, Christ, whom we call our Master, God, in whom we believe as a Father, demand of us, that we be true to these relations, that we carry out the principles, and fulfil the duties, which they involve.

The truth we hold is not Christian truth, if we do nothing, or do little, to recommend and extend it. Christian truth is in its nature and whole design, active, benevolent, diffusive. If it do not in any way declare itself, if it do not live consistently with its own name, or strive to advance its power and impart its blessings, it brings suspicion on its existence. Christianity has no greater enemy, than a false Christian. A lying believer is worse than an army of assailants. Apathy in a Christian is more to be dreaded than any peculiarity of opinion, and more difficult to understand. The world will never believe that men are Christians, and Christianity will never fill the world, until they who profess it exhibit far more than they yet have of the power of holiness, of the excellence of charity ; holiness of life, charity of faith and of deed.

E. B. H.

## THE GREYS.

"We ask not golden streams of wealth  
Along our path to flow :  
We ask not undecaying health,  
Nor length of years below.

We ask for wisdom ! Lord, impart  
The knowledge how to live ;  
A wise and understanding heart  
To all before Thee give."

"How kind you are, Jane, to come to me this dark, gloomy night," said the sick Mary to her friend, as she entered the quiet room.

"I knew you would feel sad, Mary, and so I have come to drown the voice of the sweeping wind, and 'the peltings of the pitiless storm,' by the story I promised to read you, written by our friend Sarah. I know it will cheer your drooping spirits, and make you feel that, even on this dark night, when the poor mariner is tossing o'er the angry wave, and the frail home of many a child of poverty is cold and comfortless, there are still spared to us scenes and hours around which we love to linger. But before I begin, Mary, you must promise me you will be a good listener."

"That I can easily do, Jane, for the ragings of this storm have quite subdued me to silence, and it will be no effort now for me to listen ; so, begin dear."

"The family of Greys, consisting of father, mother, and five children, lived two years in that pleasant, secluded cottage on the hill. When I first knew them, they had been in our city but a little while, and though they had no acquaintances, they seemed quite happy in their quiet cottage. The father was at his workshop all day, but when he came home at night, the children joined him in working in the garden, or sitting under the trees ; and when the season of summer enjoyments passed away, they still had the open field and the high hill-side for their play-grounds. The mother had long been an invalid, for

before they moved into our small city, they lived in one of the dark alleys of the crowded metropolis, and the want of fresh, invigorating air, and the cares of a family brought her to a state of premature weakness and suffering. But soon after the change of their residence, she felt the symptoms of returning health, by whose magic power the whole face of nature and providence assumed a new aspect to her. The first time I saw her, she dwelt upon this change, spoke of her depressed state of health and spirits before they moved here, and the relief she now enjoyed in their opposite. And so happily they lived for two years, ascribing all their change of feeling to the abode, and often saying if they were ever called upon to leave that, all their former feelings would return. We, who have been accustomed to the blessing of a home amid the pure air and scenes of cultivated society, do not understand the dreadful evils to which the families of the virtuous poor are subjected in not being able to procure such homes, but who must go down from the sunny hill-top of the rich man's abode, to the dark, noisome lanes of our cities, there in the damp air to swarm with the low and ruined of their kind. No wonder that the Greys felt like new creatures on being removed from such a neighborhood to this pleasant cottage surrounded by a garden, and crowning the hill which overlooks our beautiful city.

But the time came when a change was to be made. The cottage was to be sold, and Mr. Grey had no capital to invest in real estate; his landlord warned him to vacate the premises early in the autumn. For several days after he received the sad intelligence, he did not make it known to his wife; he could not bear to disturb her peace. But he knew the tale must be told; so, one morning at the breakfast table, with all the cheerfulness he could command he said to his family, that the house was to be sold and they must seek another home. The wife could not restrain her tears, for she well knew the difficulty of procuring, with their limited means, any place to be compared to this; and the children exclaimed, 'That's too bad; have we got to leave our garden and all these shady trees?' And so they continued all to feel, sadder as the

time of separation drew nigh. Poor Mrs. Grey, from the hour she heard the sad news, felt like a stricken one. With the dread certainty before her of this pleasant home being taken away, she went with a heavy heart to the performance of her daily duties, and every gleam of sunlight which played about this abode seemed to her as the smile which for a moment irradiates the face of the departing saint, and then leaves it to coldness and death. Autumn came, and with it the hour for the Greys to move. Mr. Grey took great pains to find a house in a retired part of the city, where they could enjoy at least fresh air. But he could not succeed. The only place that presented itself within the limits of his resources was a small house, in a street occupied by the poor; this he decided to hire, led by this only inducement, that it was not large enough to accommodate but one family. His wife felt that she did not want to look at the house, for the neighborhood and situation were altogether offensive to her. 'But,' she said, 'as we are alone in the house, we *can* close our doors, and shut out the sights of misery, and the sounds of harsh and profane language.' So, heavy-hearted and with many tears, parents and children, as the summer leaf was falling in their path, left their beloved cottage, and entered, amid the vulgar and idle stare of the reckless neighborhood, their new home.

For several weeks they scarcely spoke to any one about them. The children were told not to stop in the lane on their way to school, and after school hours they were kept within doors. The mother shunned even the sight of her next neighbor, and passed her leisure hours far from the window. But they were obliged to see and hear much that made them shudder, and constantly contrasted their present with their former home. The drunkard reeled by their door, the profane boy or girl shouted dreadful oaths in their ears, and the midnight brawls disturbed their sleeping hours. And soon, the evils attendant upon such a neighborhood came nearer. It was early discovered by the inhabitants of Long Alley that the family which lived in the yellow cottage felt themselves better than their neighbors. This was talked about through the lane by



the old and young, and thus the feeling against the Greys became very general and strong. The children first felt the effect of it. As they went out and returned from school, stones would be thrown at them, and they were called bad names. Some of the most mischievous of the boys agreed to hide behind some building, and as the Greys came along to rush out and frighten them home. This was tried with great success, and the mother was laughed at, and the windows pelted, and their clothes stolen, until Mr. Grey was obliged to complain to the public authorities; but who precisely the offenders were, could not be ascertained. However, so constant was the attack upon the mother and children during Mr. Grey's absence, that he was obliged to summon some of the boys before a council to make them an example of warning to others. Through this step, they obtained relief from the assaults of their young neighbors, but, here, as everywhere where there is a want of sympathy and the feeling of opposition engendered in the breast, it will find outward expression. The Greys had not endeavored to make friends of their unrighteous neighbors, and now they were determined to show themselves their *enemies*.

But a change in the feelings of the neighbors toward each other was soon to take place. Mrs. Grey's family became sick, and then she had no leisure or courage to think of her despised neighbors, or sigh after her former home. Her mind and hands were constantly occupied in ministering to the wants of her sick children. She had no one to help her in the care of them; the father must work all day, that he might bring home his wages at night; and after two weeks of constant anxiety, of lonely suffering, the oldest boy drew near to death. In the extremity of their grief and destitution, one evening a knock was heard at the door, and with a grateful voice Mr. Grey said, 'Come in.' The latch was slowly lifted, and one of their most despised neighbors entered. And she was welcomed by the parents. Grief had melted their hard hearts, and made them rejoice in even the sight of a human being within their house of mourning. The poor woman said kindly, that she had heard about the sickness of the children, and if she could do them

good she would stay and help them. The exhausted mother thanked her, and asked her to stay all night, for the fear of death overcame even the strong aversion which for many weeks she had cherished towards this and other neighbors. As the hour of midnight drew on, the two young children became more quiet, and one of them the stranger had rocked into a sound sleep ; while the parents left them to her care, to watch the bedside of their suffering son. As the hours passed, his breathing became fainter and fainter, and ere the dawn of another day entered their dwelling, his spirit had left its earthly tabernacle, and risen far above the discords of earth. From this departure the spirit of the mother passed through a sudden, but great change. In the presence of death, and the agony of bereavement and continued trial, her eyes were turned inward, and she saw her true position. She struggled and conquered even that aversion, which had looked with scorn upon the miserable and tempted and fallen. She mingled with her tears of bitter sorrow, those of deep contrition. She said not a word of her change, not even to her husband, but she went about the performance of her duties in gentleness, and spoke even with tenderness to the woman who had watched with her the dying and the sick. Another week passed over this family, and one more child was taken away by death, and laid in the grave. Through this week, Mrs. Jones had access to the sick chamber, and spent there all the time she could spare from her daily work. Not a word was said about the past, but she received from Mr. and Mrs. Grey, as she deserved, gratitude and kindness. As this second child was drawing its last labored breath, and its eyes closing in death, Mrs. Jones threw her arms round the neck of the weak, worn and fainting mother, and said, 'Do you know how to pray?' But no prayer was heard ; these parents seldom attended church, and were little known by ministers or Christian people. Mrs. Grey thought her health and domestic cares prevented her ; and Mr. Grey, after his week's labor, wanted his seventh day for rest. So, though correct in all their habits of life, they were without the blessed ministrations of religion. They did not pray in this their hour

of extremity. And there was no one to pray with them,—not even over the lifeless bodies of their children, for the disease of which they died was so contagious that no time for the ceremony of a funeral could be given between the hour of death and burial.

Soon after the departure of these two children, health again returned to this diminished family circle; and Mrs. Grey spent many hours of deep thoughtfulness. Winter had come on in all its severity, and bound in the world without. But within this cottage, in a despised corner of the city, the ice-bound heart had relented, and the dews of divine grace which are ever falling upon the tender soil of the heart, were melting it to love, and preparing it for a blessed harvest of joy. Mrs. Grey felt that she had cherished wrong feelings, and she *now* prayed. Her supplications for pardon and guidance were answered, and day after day as she sat alone, the good spirit was leading her willing soul through the path of meditation and prayer, to the glorious realities of the Christian life. In reviewing the past, she saw by the light which was now shed abroad in her heart, that she had been very far from what she ought to have been; that, because, in the providence of God, she was not placed with the favored in society, she had withdrawn herself from all around her and spent her time upon the little circle beneath her own roof. She was convinced that the pleasure she enjoyed in that envied home was not pure, that it arose rather from the seclusion from common neighborhoods, and improved health, than the appreciation of the beautiful works of God. And since she left that home, she felt that the whole current of her feelings was wrong, and her conduct also. She acknowledged that even that despised woman was fit to be her accuser, for as she read of the two men who went up to pray, she saw in the Pharisee who prayed thus, 'O God! I thank thee that I am not as others are,' the lineaments of her own spiritual image.

With these strong convictions, Mrs. Grey went to her husband, who had long felt that his wife was not as contented as she might be by magnifying the evils to which their common

lot with the poor subjected them ; and he was rejoiced that she was beginning to see for herself what she needed. Every day, as he returned from his labors, he found her spirit more tranquil, and once, drawing near his lowly house as the glorious sun was going down in the west, he found his wife at the window, watching its departure with a bright tear in her eye. He loved his family and he was willing to labor hard for their maintenance, and when they seemed in peace and in health he felt rewarded for all his toil. Thus in these days, which were fresh with the tears shed over the graves of their children, the bow of promise rose over their prospects and cheered their darkness.

Mrs. Jones had continued to call on Mrs. Grey, and one day as she was going out after one of these visits, Mrs. Grey asked her to come in and stay longer, for she had a great many questions to ask her. When they were seated, Mrs. Grey told her how very differently she now felt towards her and all her neighbors. And though she did not know any of them, and was often disturbed by their fightings and drunkenness, she would like to hear about them, and perhaps she could do them some good. She explained to her that she was trying to become a *Christian*, and that one way to make herself so, and prove that she was really sincere in her desire, was to 'love her neighbor as herself,' and 'do good to all as she had opportunity.' Mrs. Jones did not understand much about the first precept, but she had kind feelings, and they led her to do good. She now really loved Mrs. Grey, and she first told her about her own drunken husband, and now he would not let the children go to school ; and then she gave her as far as she was able, a picture of several families in the lane. Indeed, Long Alley was crowded with small tenements, filled always with the very poor and degraded. And though the natural sun, in God's mercy, rose upon it, and his rain descended upon its lowly roofs, the sun of righteousness had never dawned upon its swarming tenants. How should these poor, ignorant, sensual beings hear of the Gospel, unless some one carried the good news to them ? And in this favored place, the Ministry to the Poor had not been established. There were churches,

ministers, and Christians, all within the limits of our beautiful city; but there were many scenes of vice and misery yet unvisited by them, and Long Alley presented one such. While Mrs. Jones was telling her neighbor of the miserable beings living by her side, Mrs. Grey determined to visit these families and see for herself. And this resolution she told her husband when he came home at night. He was very glad, not so much on the poor's account, as that his wife might go out, and find occupation for her mind. He saw that she looked paler and paler every day, and he knew the out-door exercise and amusement would do her good. So he encouraged her to go, and after shedding a tear of contrition and offering a prayer for help, she set off to make her first visit to her poorer neighbors. As she went through the lane from house to house, she received very different treatment from their different occupants. Some scarcely bade her 'Come in,' and others, less resentful, answered in kindness her kind questions. Her name, as she announced it to one or two, seemed so unwelcome a sound, that in the remainder of her calls she succeeded better without giving it. As far as possible from a single visit, Mrs. Grey understood the varied wants of those she saw; and she went home determined to supply them. As she was telling her husband of her afternoon's employment, of this sick woman, and that ragged one, of this hungry child, and that ignorant one, she exclaimed, 'What shall I do? I have promised to help these poor creatures, but I have no clothes to carry them; your wages but just meet our necessary demands. I felt that a way would be opened to me, but where is it?' 'Why, my dear,' said Mr. Grey, 'I hear every day of sewing societies and fuel societies, and dispensary doctors, and you must apply to them, and they will afford you the necessary means.' 'Thank you, my husband, I knew that I should find just what I was seeking after: I am glad you have helped me. I can now comfort these poor miserable beings by asking clothes, wood and medicine for them. I will go to Miss Sarah May, and she will tell me where I shall find them. I am determined to do for these people what my Bible teaches me I ought to

have done long ago, to love them as myself, and do good to them as I have opportunity. And in the faith of the heart, and the practice of the Christian precepts, and not in any one situation, do I expect henceforth to find my happiness in life.'

In these acts of love did Mrs. Grey pass the remainder of her humble life. She was the means of changing the character of several of the homes in that lane. By her endeavor with the parents, the children were sent to school; and every evening in the week she had either children or parents in her own little room, teaching them to read or sew, or explaining to them the holy truths of Christianity. It was a beautiful sight to look upon, the humble couple (for the husband soon joined his wife in this labor of love,) in gentleness teaching their classes, their house changed from loneliness and gloom to an asylum for the miserable and ignorant of the neighborhood. Most of the men and boys worked all day in the factories, or on the wharves, and these they gathered into classes for instruction in the evening. And on the holy Sabbath, they urged an attendance upon the Sunday School and the services of the day, or at least prevailed upon them to remain quiet at home.

Thus employed were the leisure hours of the parents, on my return to my native city. I had left them, an unbroken family, in 'their' cottage on the sunny hill, with the green meadow and the blue river beneath them. I found them in a dark, narrow lane, shut in on every side by the habitations of the poor and despised; and as I drew near their lowly dwelling I looked in vain for the sloping meadow, or even the bright sunshine. But ere I passed out of this their new home, I found that a light brighter than the sun had entered the hearts of its inmates, and shone upon their brow. True, the sparkling river flowed not at their feet, nor the green field refreshed their gaze. Those beautiful objects of the natural world they had been called upon to leave. But better far, they had entered the garden of the Lord, where there is a 'pure river of the water of life, clear as crystal,' whose grass fadeth not, nor withereth away, and into whose sweet fields of everlasting verdure two precious members of this happy family had already been transplanted.

## INTELLIGENCE.

**DEDICATION AT MONTREAL.**—The Unitarian church at Montreal, Canada, was dedicated on Sunday morning, May 11, 1845. The services, with the exception of the sermon and prayer that followed, were conducted by Rev. Mr. Cordner, minister of the congregation; the Sermon was preached by Rev. Mr. Gannett of Boston, from 2 Corinthians iv. 13: "We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken, we also believe, and therefore speak." It was the object of the discourse, to present the truths of Unitarian Christianity, the grounds of confidence in their correctness, and the differences in faith between Unitarians and other portions of the Church. Under the first head, the preacher stated in plain and positive terms what we "believe"; under the second, he cited the threefold argument in favor of our belief, drawn from the capacities and wants of our nature, the uniform and express testimony of Scripture, and the effects which have been actually realized and witnessed; under the third, he contrasted the opinions we hold with the doctrines accounted essential or important by other denominations of believers, and other classes of men.

The building which the Unitarian society in Montreal have erected, through their own exertions and the assistance of their friends, is the only one avowedly consecrated to our faith and worship in the British Provinces, as the "Christians" in Canada do not adopt the name of Unitarians. It is built of stone, and is well finished throughout; of the Doric order of architecture, with a portico of six columns. The pediment bears this inscription on a raised tablet:—

JOHN XVII, 3.  
CHRISTIAN CHVRCH.  
UNITARIAN.

The house is 48 feet wide by 56 in length, and would therefore admit of an extension of its length without injuring the proportions. The society own sufficient ground in the rear for this purpose. It contains fifty-two pews on the floor, besides several in the gallery, where a modest, but well-toned organ occupies the centre. The house is neatly carpeted and lighted, and well ventilated. A commodious vestry is completed in the basement. Every thing, indeed, shows good judgment and taste on the part of those who have had the charge of the building. The land cost \$3,000, the payment of which will not be required for several years, and meanwhile a sinking fund, of which

the commencement has already been made, will be accumulating from certain receipts appropriated exclusively to this object. After all the expenses of erecting and furnishing the house shall have been paid, amounting to about \$9,000, a debt of a few hundred dollars may remain upon the society. The congregation is in a healthful and happy condition. Three-fourths of the pews on the floor were let immediately, and the audience is constantly increasing. The church stands in perhaps the best situation in the city of Montreal,—at the head of a broad street, which gently rises to the front of the building, when it deviates to the left, and thus leaves the front and the western side free from any danger of future concealment by other buildings. Montreal is at the present time increasing with a rapidity like that of our Western towns, and the prospects of the Unitarian society, in reference both to stability and growth, are most favorable.

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**ANNIVERSARIES.**—We are able now to furnish accounts of several interesting and important meetings held during anniversary week, of which it is desirable to preserve a record in our pages, but which it was impossible to notice in our last number.

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**AMERICAN PEACE SOCIETY.**—At the business meeting, convened at the Central Church in Winter Street, on Monday evening, May 26, 1845, the reports and resolutions that were offered gave rise to an animated discussion, betokening that those who are actively engaged in this noble cause, are full of the energetic and earnest zeal which that cause is so well calculated to inspire. Samuel E. Coues, Esq., of Portsmouth, N. H., was chosen President for the ensuing year; Joshua P. Blanchard, Esq., Treasurer; Rev. George C. Beckwith, Corresponding Secretary; James L. Baker, Esq., Recording Secretary; and sixteen gentlemen besides the President, Executive Committee. The public services were attended by a thronged and most respectable auditory. After Scripture had been read and prayer offered by Rev. Baron Stow of Boston, an address was delivered by Hon. William Jay of Bedford, N. Y., setting forth the claims laid on the friends of Peace by the present aspect and condition of the world, and the sacred responsibilities devolved on Peace Societies in view of the opposition they are obliged to encounter both from a portion of the Christian world, and from the unprincipled servants of fierce and warlike passions. Although we are ready to acknowledge there is too much color for the strictures made by Judge Jay on the body of Christian disciples



as such, yet we cannot forbear here the general remark that, at many of the late anniversaries, especially those devoted to the consideration of some special reform, we noticed a great deal of narrow-sighted and flippant abuse of the Church,—her institutions and ministrations. That the Church,—holy mother as she is of all genuine reform, all humane and philanthropic movements,—can, in her calm and hallowed dignity, afford to bear this sort of insult, is perfectly true. Her purposes are very broad and deep and far-reaching and comprehensive, too much so for the comprehension of many bigoted zealots, who can see but one thing at a time, and that only in a one-sided view. And therefore she can well and patiently bide her time, undisturbed and unhurried by the peevish taunts of those who have drawn their very life-blood from her maternal heart, and then turned with unfilial insolence to revile her. But there is warning and woe for them that have the irreverence and the frowardness to do it, notwithstanding.—We feel that we might have placed these remarks where they were more deserved, than in connexion with the almost unexceptionable performance alluded to above. We were a little sorry, we confess, to see the influence of so high and honorable a name lent to what is becoming an offensive evil among us. For the general sentiments of the address, and for the sanctity and worth of that great enterprise of pacification which seems to us to stand among the purest of all efforts that the Son of God and Prince of Peace originated on this earth, no words can express our attachment. It was the seventeenth anniversary of the Society.

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**MASSACHUSETTS BIBLE SOCIETY.**—The thirty-sixth anniversary of this association was also observed at the Central Church on Monday. The former board of officers was re-elected. It appeared that the demand for the Scriptures is constantly increasing, and it was gratifying to learn from official authority that the operations of the Society have been more efficient during the last twelvemonth than during any previous year. The spread of Catholicism on the one hand, and of an ultra rationalism on the other, have raised the effort to distribute the Scriptures into new prominence. The liberality and freedom from sectarianism of this Society, render it especially worthy of confidence. Speeches were made, well adapted to the occasion, by Rev. Daniel Butler, Agent of the American Bible Society, who paid a tribute to the exertions of Dr. S. G. Howe of the Perkins Asylum and others to procure Bibles suited to the use of the blind and to be read through the sense of touch; also, by Rev. Messrs. Robbins, Burrill and Rogers.

**PRISON DISCIPLINE SOCIETY.**—The Prison Discipline Society held its annual meeting on Tuesday morning, May 27, and re-chose its former board of officers. The Report, touching on the more prominent topics connected with prison discipline, the amelioration of the moral condition of prisoners, their treatment after their discharge, the case of persons under arrest, and the improvement of prison buildings and penitentiaries, was read by the Secretary, Lewis Dwight, Esq. Able addresses were made by G. T. Bigelow, Esq., Charles Sumner, Esq., S. G. Howe, M. D., and Hon. Judge Edmonds of New York. Dr. Howe, Charles Sumner, Esq., Lewis Dwight, Esq., Hon. S. A. Eliot, Walter Channing, M. D., G. T. Bigelow, Esq., Judge Edmonds, and Hon. Horace Mann, were appointed a committee to prepare a report on the comparative value of the Pennsylvania and Auburn systems as systems of reform. It is difficult to conceive of any form of philanthropy that comes more directly within the scope and spirit of the Gospel of Christ than one which proposes and seeks to visit the prisoner, to save the outcast, to take the wretched victim of temptation by the hand, speak kindly to him, tell him of his glorious nature, point him to his Father in Heaven, and draw him back into the peaceful ways of respectability, innocence, virtue and holiness.

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**MASSACHUSETTS CONVENTION OF CONGREGATIONAL MINISTERS.**—The annual sermon before this body was preached on Thursday, May 29, at 11 o'clock, by President Hopkins of Williams College. His subject was, The groaning and travailing of the whole creation. Rev. Parsons Cooke of Lynn was chosen Second Preacher. The First Preacher is Rev. Dr. Lamson of Dedham.

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**MASSACHUSETTS EVANGELICAL MISSIONARY SOCIETY.**—The annual meeting was held on Thursday, May 29. Hon. Richard Sullivan was elected President; Rev. Charles Lowell, D. D., Vice President; Rev. Chandler Robbins, Secretary; and Nathaniel Thayer, Esq., Treasurer. The Executive Committee was constituted by the choice of the following persons: Benjamin Guild, Esq., Rev. Francis Parkman, D. D., Rev. Samuel Barrett, Rev. A. P. Peabody, Rev. Chandler Robbins, and Nathaniel Thayer, Esq. The Board of Trustees was filled. The Report of the Trustees was presented by the Secretary, Rev. Mr. Robbins; by which it appeared that this exceedingly useful society is continuing its beneficent work with perseverance, fidelity and courage. The amount appropriated during the last year was stated to be fourteen hundred and fifty dollars.

**SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE, PIETY AND CHARITY.**—On Friday, May 30, the following officers were elected for the ensuing year:—Rev. Dr. F. Parkman, President; Rev. Samuel Barrett, Vice President; Rev. Alexander Young, Secretary; W. T. Andrews, Esq., Treasurer; Samuel May, Esq. and Rev. S. Barrett, Auditors; and Rev. Dr. Walker, with Rev. Messrs. Joseph Allen, George Putnam, F. D. Huntington, and Amos Smith, Trustees.

**ABOLITION OF CAPITAL PUNISHMENT.**—On Friday there was also a Convention of persons in favor of the Abolition of Capital Punishment at the Marlboro' Chapel, over which E. K. Whitaker, Esq. of Needham presided, and where eloquent speeches were made by distinguished gentlemen. Antislavery meetings, we may say here, marked by a great deal of excitement, were attended freely in the course of the week.

**CONGREGATIONAL CHARITABLE SOCIETY.**—The annual meeting of this society was held on Monday, June 2. Hon. Daniel A. White was chosen a Counsellor, in place of Hon. Leverett Saltonstall, deceased, and R. G. Shaw, Esq. a member, in place of Gorham Parsons, Esq., also deceased. Hon. P. C. Brooks is President for the current year; Rev. Dr. John Pierce, Vice President; Hon. James Savage, Treasurer; and Rev. Dr. Francis Parkman, Secretary.

**BOOK AND PAMPHLET SOCIETY.**—The annual meeting was held on Monday, June 2: John G. Rogers, Esq. President; Lewis G. Pray, Vice President; S. G. Simpkins, Secretary; A. H. Sumner, Treasurer; and thirty-one persons, Directors. It is proposed to extend the operations of this excellent association the ensuing year. The anniversary sermon was preached in the Federal Street Church on the evening of June 1, by Rev. F. D. Huntington.

#### ITEMS.

**THE** Baltimore Methodist Convention, lately in session, shewed a firm determination to adhere to Antislavery views.

**THE** corner-stone of a new Seaman's Home, on Purchase Street, Boston, was laid on the 8th of May, with appropriate services.

**THE** General Baptist Convention, recently assembled at Providence, was occupied, to a great extent, with the discussion of the question whether slaveholders in the denomination should be employed as

missionaries, and whether the action of the Board to that effect should be sustained. The subject of a disruption of the Northern and Southern sections was introduced, and the whole matter was finally left in the hands of the Convention without a very decisive determination. The debt of the Baptist Foreign Missionary Society has increased, we observe, to the amount of \$40,000.

REV. JOHN PIERPONT preached his Farewell discourse to the people of whom he has been Pastor for the last twenty-seven years, the Hollis Street Society, on the 4th of May. The proprietors of the Hollis Street Church have made arrangements to have the building thoroughly repaired, and services held regularly on the Sabbath.

A NEW Unitarian society has been gathered at South Boston, and the ministerial services of Rev. M. G. Thomas secured for the present. We understand the Hawes Place Church is now in a flourishing condition.

THE recent announcement of the death of Andrew Jackson, late President of the United States, has afforded an opportunity for the display of some very generous and some very mean traits of character. All readers of newspapers must have observed that some editors, not under the sway of party dictation and party feeling, have forgotten temporary animosities and spoken with a becoming respect of the abilities, services and life of this distinguished citizen. Another class of editors, devoted also to the advocacy of political measures which General Jackson strenuously opposed, have displayed a different and much lower tone of feeling. They have alluded to this solemn event, an event that must have brought profound grief to many hearts, either with a coldness chilling to every liberal spirit, or with an acerbity and censoriousness wholly out of taste, and indicative of a coarse, narrow nature. To pursue the dead, whatever their political errors, with public animadversion or unfriendly criticism, betrays a temper that might rob a sepulchre or pollute a temple. It is just one of those melancholy indications that show a sad absence of veneration, and a deep moral disease to be fastened on a large portion of the political press. The pretence of honesty or frankness will not furnish an apology broad enough to cover it. To say nothing of a character so strongly marked as Gen. Jackson's, the fact that he has stood forth for eight years the highest officer and representative of our national government, should entitle his name now to honorable mention from any real American patriot's lips. On the other hand, those journals attached to the cause in which President Jackson was a leader, have manifested an equally deplorable moral dereliction whenever they have connected this national providence with any partizan encomiums or partial eulogies.